

November 17, 2003

To: Federal Program Agency Deputy Chief Financial Officers

The Financial Management Service (FMS) will be removing the Social Security Numbers (SSNs) and Employer Identification Numbers (EINs) from the face of U. S. Treasury checks issued beginning on January 1, 2004, due to privacy and identity theft concerns as prescribed in TFM Bulletin No. 2003-03, Removal of Personal Identification Numbers (PINs) from U. S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury) Checks.

The removal of SSN's and/or EIN's for garnishment checks could cause some recipient agencies difficulty in identifying and processing these checks. For example, even though FMS and Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) have been working with Federal Program Agencies (FPAs) to convert their wage withholdings for child support payments to Electronic Funds Transfer/Electronic Data Interchange (EFT/EDI) not all have complied. Please note that the Debt Collection Improvement Act (DCIA) mandated EFT/EDI for all Federal payments after January 1, 1999, with a few exceptions. Additionally, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) also known as the Welfare Reform Legislation of 1996 required that states develop EFT/EDI centralized collection and disbursement capability. Currently several agencies/bureaus have already converted to EFT/EDI. All remaining FPAs should convert their child support/alimony, tax levy, and other garnishment payments to EFT/EDI as soon as possible.

Converting garnishment payments to EFT/EDI will greatly benefit the State offices and Government agencies receiving the payments. The use of EFT/EDI will ensure that all garnishment payments going to the State Disbursement Units (SDUs), State offices, and Government agencies will be accurately applied to the proper Child Support Case, Court Case, tax account, etc., in a timely manner. In addition, the payroll providers designated by the Office of Personnel Management have either converted or will be converting to EFT/EDI. FPAs must fully convert garnishment checks to EFT/EDI prior to December 31, 2004. Until then, agencies have an option of having the SSN printed on garnishment checks by following the enclosed "exception processing" procedures.

We are available to work with your Federal payroll offices in order to accomplish a smooth transition from Treasury checks to EFT/EDI for garnishment checks. If you have any questions regarding converting to EFT/EDI, please contact Karen Price on 202-874-6702 or Rose Miller on 202-874-6881. If you have any questions regarding removal of SSNs from the checks or exception processing, please call Betty Harvey at 202-874-6798.

Sincerely,

Anthony R. Torrice  
Assistant Commissioner  
Regional Operations

Enclosure

## ENCLOSURE

### GARNISHMENT DATA IS IN BOLD TYPE

For child support payments, the State SDU contact list is being provided for your use and convenience of making contact with the appropriate state staff persons for child support payments. The link is as follows for the SDU contact list:

[http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/newhire/employer/contracts/sdu\\_matrix.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/newhire/employer/contracts/sdu_matrix.htm)

FPA formats for EFT payments using the ACH Vendor/Miscellaneous Payments are available on the FMS website. The links are:

<http://fms.treas.gov/bulktransfers/index.html> (ACH Vendor/Miscellaneous Payment formats)

<http://fms.treas.gov/csp/dedseg.html> (Child Support DED Addendum Segment)

Below are examples of the data that the FPA's can put into their vendor, miscellaneous, and salary payment files (garnishment data in bold):

#### 1. Vendor/Miscellaneous Payments:

Code 1 Check with one Payment ID Line (one line with 40 positions) utilized at bottom of check:

Collection Service Center PO Box 1234 Any Place, USA 12345
<b>Case #1234567890/987654321/John Doe</b>
MICR Line

Code 1 Check with both Payment ID Lines (2 Lines with 40 positions each) utilized at bottom of check:

Collection Service Center PO Box 1234 Any Place, USA 12345
<b>Case #1234567890</b> <b>John Doe/987654321</b>
MICR Line

## 2. Salary Payments:

Salary check with Payment ID Line (45 positions available) utilized at bottom of check 1/:

<p>Collection Service Center PO Box 1234 Any Place, USA 12345</p> <p><b>Case #1234567890/987654321/John Doe</b></p> <hr/> <p>MICR Line</p>
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1/ Salary Line Code 9 Data Record has three fields available where SSN can be placed to be printed in the Payment Identification Field on the Treasury check. The fields are:

- Field No. 15 – Allotter Name; pos. 58 - 82 (25 positions)
- Field No. 20 – Blanks or Continuation Field; pos. 180 – 187 (8 positions)
- Field No. 21 – Account Number; pos. 188 – 199 (12 positions)

Please note that SSNs/EINs are still required to be in Field No. 1 (positions 1 – 9) of the Salary Data Records and in Field No. 4 (positions 15 – 23) of the Vendor/Miscellaneous Data Records.

Contact Information:

FMS:

Checks and agency formats:

Betty Harvey, 202-874-6798, email: [Betty.Harvey@fms.treas.gov](mailto:Betty.Harvey@fms.treas.gov)

EFT:

Rose Miller, 202-874-6881, email: [Rose.Miller@fms.treas.com](mailto:Rose.Miller@fms.treas.com)

Lovenia Murray, 202-874-6945, email: [Lovenia.Murray@fms.treas.gov](mailto:Lovenia.Murray@fms.treas.gov)

**DHHS:**

Karen Anthony, 202-690-6275, email: [kanthony@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:kanthony@acf.hhs.gov)

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Sheila Bradley, 202-260-2785, email: [sbradley@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:sbradley@acf.hhs.gov)